7:Crowder J-5 (1955-1958) 1959
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living. What we must preserve completely is that, though, of course, I realize, it is no longer possible to treat the economic and political problems of Africa on the level of the tribes. However, what Africa could give to the West, is the sense of democratic function. People tend to laugh at the institution of the village palaver house, but it is the great school of politics. Decisions there are taken on the basis not of a majority but of unanimity. They will talk night and day till the last man in the village is convinced their common action is right.'

Arnold looked at D'Arboussier somewhat suspiciously when he talked largely about the 'African' and his personality. As a Creole, Arnold, I think, detected D'Arboussier's own dilemma, as a Mulatto, who was not sure where he belonged. To Africa or Europe?

For a man who had once been a Communist sympathizer D'Arboussier was surprisingly moderate. There was no talk of independence or an immediate rupture with France.

'We have decided that absolute independence would be a burden,' he told me.

One of my best friends in Dakar was a young Toucouleur, of my own age, who was a member of the newly formed Partie Africane de L'Independence, which was in complete opposition to the creation of any Franco-African Community, who believed that France exploited Africa, and the sooner Africa was rid of her the better.

He himself was extremely well-educated, with no immediately obvious motive for bitterness against the French. Indeed, it was a Frenchman who introduced me to him. He took me to the headquarters of the party, a small bookshop in a side street of Dakar. It was well decorated, and its shelves were lined with books on Marxist Socialism and Communism, a lesser Colletts. Mixed with picture books about Rumania and Russia and the Chinese way of life were the French Classics. Mahjemout Diop, one of the leaders of this party, as yet with little influence, received me in his office and lectured me on the evils of French administration. There was something clandestine about our encounter in this side office and yet with Africans in power at the Grand Conseil, and with an African Prime Minister of the Senegal I could not help thinking his anti-colonialist crusade a

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of the masters and are married by them. They have no property rights nor a voice in the village councils, being constrained to menial work. This condition cannot be compared to that of the slave of the two Americas in former times; it is more reminiscent of that of bondage in the Europe of the Middle Ages. Before the legal suppression of this custom a certain number of captives had already been freed, but the prejudice against these people remains, and they constitute, in fact, the inferior caste in the social hierarchy.

S 564 463 It is the hereditary work of the artisans that, properly speaking, distinguishes the men of the castes from the others: work in wood, leather, metal, and cotton thread. This distinction is transmitted from father to son, whatever calling is actually practiced. A captive may practice weaving, but he will never belong to the caste of weavers; conversely, a man belonging to the caste of jewelers may be a doctor of medicine and practice the profession of medicine.

S 582 565 Marriage most clearly distinguishes the social barriers which the child inherits from its father. Although there is no rigid interdict, there is such ostracism that it is practically impossible for a man to marry a woman of an inferior caste without risking loss of status and being banned from society. There is one exception: it may happen that a master marries his captive in order to have children who are free; the mother will be set free by this act, but if the union is sterile the woman remains in the condition of servitude.

S [567]

S 565 The system of castes is still very much alive, especially among the Toucouleur, and actually divides the ethnic group into partial populations, which, however, are less numerous than in India.

The functional nature of the castes has brought about in the course of their history the appearance of a hierarchy. Among the Toucouleur there are first the free men (rimbé), not belonging to the trade castes, and among /670/ whom, at the head, are the torobé (singular, torodo). Originally, in the Fouta Toro, this word in Arabic designated a scholar, a propagator of Islam. It

1 [i.e., The captives -- Analyst]